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## RECENT LITERATURE IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

ONE of the most striking evidences that Harnack in his lectures on *Das Wesen des Christentums* has voiced a problem which men today feel to be very real is seen in the large number of books dealing with this theme. Some of them were evidently suggested by Harnack's book. Others have arisen independently. Seeberg, one of Harnack's colleagues at Berlin, who had the courage to write an excellent *Dogmengeschichte* almost immediately after Harnack's great work was completed, now publishes his public lectures on the fundamental truths of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Unlike some of his professional brethren, Seeberg studiously avoids all polemic against Harnack, although the temptation to emphasize his own views by contrast must at times have been great. He has given us a strong, dignified presentation of Christianity as it has been traditionally interpreted. As the title indicates, he proceeds upon the theory that Christianity means certain "truths" concerning God, Christ, man, and the world. The first half of the book discusses the "truth" of the Christian religion, while the second half sets forth the "truths." His method is thus akin to that of the older theologians, who demonstrated the absoluteness of Christianity before setting forth its content. But in the presence of a miscellaneous audience of critical students, the lecturer naturally appeals to vital rather than to formal aspects of religious authority. The first part thus shows that Christianity meets the needs of religious aspiration as no other religion or philosophy does, while the second part shows the religious significance of the traditional doctrines of theology. The author will thus have a valuable message for many who are repelled by the radical traits of Harnack's book. His wide scholarship and broad and sympathetic spirit were never seen to better advantage than here.—A book more in harmony with Harnack's purpose is Soltau's.<sup>2</sup> He feels the pressure of the modern scientific spirit, and is willing to abandon a large portion of traditional Christianity if only he can save its central truth for modern life. He asserts that the current definitions of science are too narrow. Science should include morality, and here it finds common ground with Christianity. "Original Christianity" is then

<sup>1</sup> *Grundwahrheiten der christlichen Religion*. Ein akademisches Publikum in sechzehn Vorlesungen vor Studierenden aller Facultäten der Universität Berlin im Winter 1901-2 gehalten. Von REINHOLD SEEBERG. Leipzig: Deichert, 1902. v+165 pages. M. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ursprüngliches Christentum in seiner Bedeutung für die Gegenwart*. Von WILHELM SOLTAU. Leipzig: Dieterich, 1902. 160 pages. M. 2.80.

differentiated from its later ecclesiastical forms by the adoption of the gospel of Mark and the logia of the first and third gospels as the norm. Yet even here much must be excluded as antiquated (*e. g.*, the eschatology of Jesus' sayings). We thus have an "original Christianity" which will readily fit into the ethico-scientific philosophy of a modern man. Soltau had already wrought out his position before Harnack's more brilliant lectures appeared. While sharing Harnack's sympathy with the perplexities of the modern scientific student, he lacks the personal religious warmth and historical sympathy necessary to give force to so radical a departure from current conceptions.

What would professional engineers think of a book on engineering written by a clergyman? Yet a book on Christian evidences by an engineer<sup>3</sup> is expected to be read soberly! The author defines Christianity as "the facts and doctrines contained in the three creeds" (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian) (p. 272). But a large part of the book deals with problems of which these creeds are totally innocent, *e. g.*, the authorship and date of the Pentateuch, and the scientific accuracy of the first chapter of Genesis. So many of the "facts" and arguments of the book may be so easily negated by any skeptic who chooses to collate the conclusions of recognized Christian scholars that the argument might readily prove a boomerang.—Dr. Pierson's<sup>4</sup> essay into the field of apologetics reveals his strength as an orator and rhetorician; but unfortunately a weakness in critical scholarship is often evident. He has presented a masterly cumulation of facts which an infidel must somehow explain if he is to reject Christianity. But a vivid imagination leads the author sometimes to make statements which will scarcely stand the test of sober examination; as, for example, his triumphant appeal to the hundreds of Old Testament prophecies of specific details, all of which he declares to have been literally fulfilled. The book will be more consoling to unshaken believers than convincing to critical doubters.—Somewhat more satisfactory is Dr. Robbins's<sup>5</sup> attempt to set forth inductively the evidence which compels belief in the divinity of Jesus. His supreme moral character, his witness concerning himself, his resurrection, his fulfilment of prophecy

<sup>3</sup> *The Truth of Christianity*. By Major W. H. TURTON. Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., 1902. 538 pages. \$1.25, *net*.

<sup>4</sup> *The Gordian Knot*; or, The Problem Which Baffles Infidelity. By ARTHUR T. PIERSON. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1902. 264 pages. \$0.60, *net*.

<sup>5</sup> *A Christian Apologetic*. By WILFORD L. ROBBINS. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1902. 193 pages. 2s. 6d.

(spiritually rather than technically), and the attesting power of the Spirit in the lives of those who believe in Christ—these are shown to have a religious value which makes it impossible for us to account for Jesus by any other theory than that he is divine.—A similar attempt to base Christian belief upon religious values is made in Niebergall's<sup>6</sup> excellent pamphlet. But here the logical conclusions of this method are recognized, and the appeal is made exclusively to value-judgments. History can yield only objective facts (*Beweisgründe*), which are neutral spiritually save as the religious consciousness assigns significance (*Beweggründe*) to some. To those who have lost confidence in the historical evidence for Christianity the author urges the empirical test of action. If Jesus seems worthy of your moral and spiritual reverence, follow him practically without trying first to settle speculative questions concerning his divinity. While the argument is familiar, the thoughtful, clear way in which it is worked out makes the pamphlet of unusual value.—Another form of the same problem is presented in Vischer's<sup>7</sup> inquiry whether the truth of Christianity is demonstrable. He asserts that no one can rest satisfied with mere value-judgments; for to be blessed by hugging an ideal with no objective foundation is to be dreaded above all things. But the "truth" of Christianity cannot be identified with its total historical content, for this includes papal tyranny, inquisitions, doctrinal errors, etc., which we cannot defend. If, however, we take some specific aspect of historical Christianity, we can be charged with arbitrary selection of only such material as will make for our desired conclusion. If we attempt to build on the historical Jesus, we can reach him only by the results of historical criticism, which are always tentative. No absolute demonstration can rest on historical data. Christianity is not mere history, but a belief in Christ as the revelation of God. But God is Lord of the universe; hence all truth in the universe belongs to Christianity. Thus Professor Vischer merely reproduces Justin Martyr's apology. Why is not this argument equally efficacious for Buddhism, provided one is allowed to define one's religion as the sum of truth, whatever it be and wherever it be found?

A little book of wonderful freshness and vigor comes from the pen of Arthur Bonus.<sup>8</sup> He declares that we have attempted to describe

<sup>6</sup> *Ein Pfad zur Gewissheit*. Von F. NIEBERGALL. Tübingen: Mohr, 1902. 45 pages. M. 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ist die Wahrheit des Christentums zu beweisen?* Von EBERHARD VISCHER. Tübingen: Mohr, 1902. 54 pages. M. 1.20.

<sup>8</sup> *Religion als Schöpfung*. Von ARTHUR BONUS. Leipzig: Diederichs, 1902. 63 pages. M. 1.50.

religion in terms of cumbersome systems. We have imposed an intolerable burden upon laymen by making no provision for an untheological religious life. Today the scientific collapse of these systems just at the time when the spirit of independent thought is so prominent has brought us face to face with a momentous crisis. Religion must prove itself to be a creative power in the life of men, if it is to survive. The other-worldliness of past centuries must give way to a new Christianity which shall conquer the present world through the power of the divine life realized in the soul. God is the eternal creator. In religious experience we may share his creative power and through it transform the world. The author's stirring vigor reminds one of Nietzsche; but the content of his message is genuinely Christian.—An optimistic, but judicial survey of the spiritual currents of today is presented in Selleck's little volume of essays.<sup>9</sup> The broad sympathies of the author are seen in his attempt to follow the Golden Rule in his treatment of movements in which he does not believe. He thus, for example, sets forth the positive religious value of Roman Catholicism and of Christian Science in an admirable way; and his exposure of defects is in a kindly spirit.—By way of contrast we may mention two pamphlets dealing with Christian Science in a polemic spirit.<sup>10</sup> While there is ample ground for the keen thrusts of these arguments, yet it may be safely assumed that a movement of such extent does not spring up without some cause. And until that cause is discovered, Scripture refutation, satire, ridicule, and all other random weapons will have little effect save upon those who need no convincing.—In *Catholic Principles*<sup>11</sup> we have a vigorous tract to demonstrate the absolute and exclusive claims of the "American Catholic Church in the United States commonly called the Protestant Episcopal Church" as the sole rightful representative of Christianity. Proper apostolic credentials are of more importance to the author than spiritual qualifications. By reading into the word "kingdom" in the New Testament all the marks of the visible church, the author finds his full-fledged "Catholic" church in existence during the lifetime of Jesus. The New Testament is not a primary authority. It is the official promul-

<sup>9</sup> *The Spiritual Outlook*. By WILLARD CHAMBERLAIN SELLECK. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1902. 349 pages. \$1.

<sup>10</sup> *A Short Method with Christian Science*. By ALBERT G. LAWSON. 56 pages. *The Christian Science Cult*. By J. J. TAYLOR. 40 pages. Both published by the American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>11</sup> *Catholic Principles*. By FRANK N. WESTCOTT. Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., 1902. 410 pages. \$1.25, net.

gation of the Church. The skeptical critic will be somewhat amused at this naïve position so close to the infidel's theory that Christianity, Bible, and all are the creation of priestcraft. How can the "American Catholic Church" meet this argument without completely abandoning its theory of authority?—The "immortal problem of theodicy is discussed in *Eternalism*,<sup>12</sup> a book consisting of short detached chapters written in a dogmatic style. Two propositions are iterated and reiterated: (1) Eternal justice is the fundamental law of the universe. (2) If God creates the vicious and crippled souls which come into the world we cannot maintain justice. To escape making God the author of evil, the author asserts the eternal pre-existence and after-existence of all souls. This life is but a fragment of such existence and reveals the character which each soul has achieved for itself in its former life. A universe of uncreated, undying, atomistic souls, each carrying with itself its own heaven or hell, each alone fighting the battle with evil, while abstract Justice on the throne of deity looks on and says, "Whatever occurs, I am not responsible"—such a theodicy will scarcely attract serious attention.

One of the greatest services which scholarship can render is the publishing of authoritative editions of works of historic value. Hitherto Schleiermacher's *Monologues* have been regularly published from the fourth edition which appeared in 1829. Schiele<sup>13</sup> has given us the text of 1800, which is more marked by the youthful enthusiasm of the great theologian than are the later more reflective editions. The textual variations in the different editions are given in full at the foot of every page. A bibliography and an exhaustive index make this edition of great value to students of Schleiermacher.—An attractive reprint of two of Ritschl's great treatises<sup>14</sup> will be welcomed by many students.—A cheap edition of Matthew Arnold's *Literature and Dogma*<sup>15</sup> puts this work within the reach of everyone.

<sup>12</sup> *Eternalism; A Theory of Infinite Justice.* By ORLANDO J. SMITH. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1902. viii + 321 pages. \$1.25, net.

<sup>13</sup> *Friedrich Schleiermacher's Monologen.* Kritische Ausgabe. Von FRIEDRICH MICHAEL SCHIELE. ("Philosophische Bibliothek," Bd. 84.) Leipzig: Dürr, 1902. xli + 130 pages. M. 1.40.

<sup>14</sup> *Die christliche Vollkommenheit: Theologie und Metaphysik.* Zur Verständigung und Abwehr. Von ALBRECHT RITSCHL. Dritter unveränderter Abdruck. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1902. 95 pages. M. 1.60.

<sup>15</sup> *Literature and Dogma.* By MATTHEW ARNOLD. London: Watts & Co., 1902. 120 pages. 6d.

Kähler's<sup>16</sup> is one of the many booklets called out by a remark in Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 91: "Nicht der Sohn sondern allein der Vater gehört in das Evangelium, wie es Jesus verkündigt hat, hinein." As Harnack has since indicated, these polemical critics, without exception, overlooked *hartnäckig* the important modifying clause, namely, "wie es Jesus verkündigt hat." Kähler's argument is that Jesus was in the gospel as preached by Paul, by John, by the synoptists, and therefore Jesus was in the gospel as preached by himself. Harnack himself would admit the former, much as he is convinced that the latter is a *non sequitur*. The book grazes close to being a piece of special pleading and merits no extended consideration here.—Professor Ihmels's<sup>17</sup> acute and profound discussion was evoked by the various writings of Troeltsch on the subject and on kindred topics, such as: "Die Selbständigkeit des Christentums," *Zeitschrift für Theologie u. Kirche*, 1895, 1896; "Metaphysik u. Geschichte," *ibid.*, 1898, pp. 1 ff.; "Zur theologischen Lage," *Christliche Welt*, 1898, p. 627; *Theologische Jahresbericht*, Vol. XVIII, p. 509; *Die wissenschaftliche Lage und ihre Anforderungen an die Theologie*, 1900. Is the religio-historical treatment compatible with the further judgment that Christianity is the only true religion? Ihmels agrees with Troeltsch in the rejection of the neo-Kantian treatment of religion and in the demand for the recognition of ontological principles. He differs with Troeltsch because he holds the latter's position to be destructive of a joyous and firm attitude toward Christianity. Such an attitude can be gained only by means of an investigation of Christianity as an object that is surely given, that is, by means of a Christian theory of knowledge fitted to this object; such a Christian epistemology accordingly can establish the validity of its object with full certainty only on the basis of the unique supernatural miraculous causality of the experience of conversion operating on the basis of the Bible and guaranteeing the Bible. Ihmels's desire for stability and certitude in this region is intelligible and praiseworthy, but his method, which is that of Frank, of whom he is a disciple, is open to serious objection. Both alike attain the satisfaction of their desire by appealing to what is to them the absolutely isolated supernatural factor of regeneration, or, as they sometimes say, conversion. The method presupposes

<sup>16</sup> *Gehört Jesus in das Evangelium?* Von MARTIN KÄHLER. Zweite Auflage. Leipzig: Deichert, 1901. 38 pages. M. 0.75.

<sup>17</sup> *Die Selbständigkeit der Dogmatik gegenüber der Religionsphilosophie.* Von LUDWIG IHMELS. Leipzig: Deichert, 1901. 34 pages. M. 1.

a conception or theory of the supernatural which is no longer tenable from the point of view of modern science and philosophy. According to Ihmels, the supernatural principle is verified in the inner miracle which is itself dependent upon outer miracle. But it is to be urged against him that historical science can neither prove nor disprove the possibility or impossibility, the occurrence or non-occurrence of a miraculous event. In a word, it is the way in which Ihmels draws the supernatural into his argument that vitiates his conclusions, careful and instructive as his discussion is in so many directions.—Loofs's book<sup>18</sup> was overdue eleven years—a circumstance for which the author offers no explanation. He, however, congratulates himself that on account of the delay he has been made debtor to the historical and systematic labors of Kattenbusch, Harnack, Zahn, Kunze, Burns, and Heimbucher. The works of these men have necessitated manifold revisions of his own manuscript. To Kattenbusch in particular is he under obligation. Unlike most outlines, the book is greatly burdened with *Anmerkungen*, but the text is uniformly intelligible without reference to these on the part of the student. The book is divided into two parts, historical and methodological introduction, and expository symbolics. In the former he discusses the symbols that have arisen in the history of the various branches of the Christian Church. In the latter he takes up the orthodoxy of the Greek-Catholic and the Roman-Catholic Churches. The confessional and dogmatic cult, custom, and piety of these Churches are set forth with patient detail as to fact and with philosophical comprehension and insight as to principles. The whole book is a monument of vast and exact historical learning, and will probably remain an authority on the subject for years to come. The author promises that the second half of his work shall appear within a year.—Symbolics, as conceived by Plitt in his *Grundriss*<sup>19</sup> has both a theoretical and a practical task. As it fulfils the former, it is a history, interpretation, and comparison of the confessional theology of the various churches; as it fulfils the latter, its practical service consists in its being an irenicon on the basis of the results of the modern scientific study of the Bible. The editor has carried the work on to further completeness. The introduction and

<sup>18</sup> *Symbolik oder christliche Konfessionskunde*. Von FRIEDRICH LOOFS. Erster Band. (= "Grundriss der theologischen Wissenschaften," sechzehnte Abtheilung.) Tübingen: Mohr, 1902. xvi + 430 pages. M. 6.60.

<sup>19</sup> *Grundriss der Symbolik oder Konfessionskunde*. Von GUSTAV PLITT. In vierter, umgearbeiteter Auflage herausgegeben von Victor Schulze. Leipzig: Deichert, 1902. 175 pages. M. 2.80.



the first part (Greek Church) have been subjected to a further elaboration. In the second part (Roman Church) a series of changes have also been made. The appendix, treating of extra-ecclesiastical communities, is almost entirely new, but the treatment of the Lutheran Church and of the Reformed Church remains as the author himself left it. The book is simply written, the array of facts is vast, and its objective treatment is true to the scientific spirit. It is not a philosophy, but the history, of confessions and as such is to be confidently recommended to all who wish a simple introduction into a complicated and difficult subject.

GEORGE B. FOSTER.

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH.

#### RECENT LITERATURE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

SEVENTEEN of the representative men of the Bible are treated by Dr. Matheson in a suggestive volume.<sup>1</sup> It begins with Adam and ends with Job. Questions of historical criticism for the most part are ignored. The "Great Gallery" of the Jewish nation is filled with portraits. Who painted them is a matter of indifference. The interpretation of them is the thing of prime importance. What in them is universal in distinction from what is merely national, what is of permanent, instead of temporary, worth? Old notions in reference to the characters discussed are radically modified or wholly set aside. New and suggestive interpretations are presented and vigorously defended. In all these is the accent of conviction. Here and there the spirit of assurance crops out. It is barely possible that the author's new constructions may not be absolutely right. His discussions are also at times disfigured by rationalistic explanations of Old Testament miracles. The burning bush at Horeb was a dream in a hot day. The prophets of Baal with Elijah on the slopes of Carmel were an "œcumenical council." The fire sent in answer to Elijah's prayer was fire imparted to life. Elisha when he healed Naaman "sent him to a bathing establishment." It is a pity that so good a book should be marred by such inane puerilities.—Dr. Hovey's *Life of Barnas Sears*<sup>2</sup> is a fascinating biography. The subject of it is made to live over again before our eyes his long and unusually useful life. He lays a stone wall

<sup>1</sup> *The Representative Men of the Bible*. By GEORGE MATHESON. New York: Armstrong & Son, 1902. 369 pages.

<sup>2</sup> *Barnard Sears, A Christian Educator: His Making and Work*. By ALVAH HOVEY. New York: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1902. ix + 184 pages. \$1.